



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

*Marine Resources Commission
2600 Washington Avenue
Third Floor
Newport News, Virginia 23607*

Molly Joseph Ward
Secretary of Natural Resources

John M.R. Bull
Commissioner

February 28, 2017

TO: SUMMER FLOUNDER INDUSTRY

FROM: VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

RE: 2017 FINAL SPECIFICATIONS AND OPENING NOTICE FOR VIRGINIA'S OFFSHORE SUMMER FLOUNDER FISHERY

Effective 12:01 A.M. Eastern Standard Time, Wednesday March 1, 2017, the Directed Virginia Offshore Summer Flounder Fishery will open for vessels with a Virginia Summer Flounder Endorsement License. Legally licensed vessels in the Virginia Offshore Summer Flounder Fishery shall be held to the following provisions:

- The landing limit for the Offshore (EEZ) Fishery from March 1 through April 30, 2017 is 7,500 pounds. Vessels may land a maximum of 7,500 pounds for the entire period of March 1 through April 30, 2017.
- It is unlawful for any vessel to land in Virginia any amount of summer flounder more than once in any consecutive 5-day period.
- Only vessels holding a valid Virginia Summer Flounder Endorsement License may possess summer flounder.
- It shall be unlawful for a licensed seafood buyer or federally permitted seafood buyer to fail to use the VMRC online reporting system to inform the Marine Resources Commission prior to a vessel offloading Summer Flounder harvested outside of Virginia. The buyer shall provide to the Commission the name of the vessel and its captain and the anticipated or approximate offloading time. <https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/harvest/index.php>

An Agency of the Natural Resources Secretariat

www.mrc.virginia.gov

Telephone (757) 247-2200 (757) 247-2292 V/TDD Information and Emergency Hotline 1-800-541-4646 V/TDD

- Once offloading of any vessel is complete and the total weight of the landed Summer Flounder has been determined, the buyer shall use the VMRC online reporting system to inform the Marine Resources Commission of the vessel name and corresponding total weight of Summer Flounder landed.
- It shall be unlawful, for any person, to offload, from a boat or vessel, for commercial purposes, any Summer Flounder during the period of 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
- Prior to December 31, 2017, or when it is projected and announced that 85% of the offshore quota has been taken, it shall be unlawful to:
 1. possess on board any vessel in Virginia waters any amount of Summer Flounder, in excess of 10%, by weight, of Atlantic croaker or the combined landings, on board a vessel, of black sea bass, scup, squid, scallops and Atlantic mackerel, or
 2. possess on board any vessel in Virginia waters any amount of Summer Flounder, in excess of 1,500 pounds, landed in combination with Atlantic croaker, or
 3. fail to land and sell the vessel's entire harvest at the point of landing.

Any boat or vessel possessing summer flounder on board or entering Virginia waters for safe harbor shall contact the Marine Resources Commission Operations Center in advance of such entry into Virginia waters. Authorization for safe harbor must be approved by the Commissioner. Any vessel declaring a need for safe harbor may be subject to inspection by the United States Coast Guard Marine Safety Office.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Joe Cimino at (757) 247-2236 or Jill Ramsey at (757) 247-2243.